

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 10, and 15 have been amended. Claims 11, 12, and 14 have been canceled. Claims 19-32 have been added. Claims 1-10, 13, and 15-32 are now pending. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the original claims and other claims in this and other applications. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the above-referenced application in light of the amendments and following remarks.

At the outset, Applicants acknowledge with appreciation that claims 2, 11, 12, 14, and 15 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form, including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Allowable dependent claim 2 has been rewritten as new independent claim 19. Allowable dependent claim 11 has been rewritten as new independent claim 20. Allowable dependent claim 12 has been rewritten as new independent claim 21. Allowable dependent claim 14 has been rewritten as new independent claim 22. Claim 15 has been amended to depend from allowable new independent claim 22.

Claims 1, 3-10, 13, and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Hiotsune, or Terao, or Miyamoto (U.S. Patent No.: 6,775,226 ("Miyamoto I"), or Miyamoto (U.S. Patent No.: 6,7709,801 ("Miyamoto II"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite "a sulfuration-inhibiting layer formed over said upper protective layer." The recited sulfuration-inhibiting layer is an important aspect of claim 1, as amended. Please refer, for example, to Applicants' specification, pg. 44, second paragraph through pg. 45, second paragraph. The prior art of record does not teach a sulfuration-inhibiting layer formed over an upper protective

layer. Claims 2-10 and 16-18 depend from claim 1 and should be similarly allowable along with claim 1.

Further, Applicants respectfully submit that newly added claims 23-32 should also be allowable over the prior art of record. New independent claim 23 recites an optical recording medium comprising, “a transparent substrate; a lower protective layer . . . a recording layer . . . an upper protective layer . . . and a sulfuration-inhibiting layer.” As indicated above, the prior art of record does not teach a sulfuration-inhibiting layer. Claims 24-27 depend from claim 23 and should be similarly allowable.

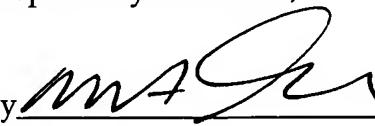
New independent claim 28 recites an optical recording medium comprising, “a transparent substrate; a lower protective layer . . . a recording layer . . . an upper protective layer . . . a sulfuration-inhibiting layer . . . a reflective layer . . . and an organic protective film layer.” The prior art of record does not teach a sulfuration-inhibiting layer or protective film layer. Claims 29-31 depend from claim 28 and should be similarly allowable.

New independent claim 32 recites an optical recording medium comprising, “a substrate comprising a wobbled groove, said wobbled groove having a track pitch of $0.74\pm0.03 \mu\text{m}$, a groove depth of 22 nm to 40 nm, and a groove width of 0.17 μm to 0.30 μm ; a lower protective layer . . . a recording layer . . . an upper protective layer . . . and an organic protective film layer formed over the upper protective layer.” The prior art of record does not teach a substrate with a wobbled groove having Applicants’ claimed track pitch, depth, and width. The recited dimensions of the wobbled groove is an important aspect of claim 32. Please refer, for example, to Applicants’ specification, pg. 28, second paragraph through pg. 29, third paragraph.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

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Respectfully submitted,

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